

ELEMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

Elements of leadership, vital to the effectiveness of a leader, can be classified into five major categories.

Values development

A leader's value system impacts greatly on the effectiveness of an organization. How a leader influences the values development of individuals and the organization will provide the foundation for technical excellence and effective leadership.

People skills

People skills are important because leadership is a relationship that depends on the interaction between a leader and followers. Interpersonal skills are vitally important in the process of inspiring others toward implementing the leader's vision.

- Listen
- Communicate
- Build professional networks
- Manage conflict
- Evaluate self in relation to others

Process skills

Process skills include process management, continuous process improvement, problem solving, decision making, goal setting, and planning. Process skills may also include skills that are considered management skills, such as skills to administer policies and enforce rules and regulations.

Professional knowledge

Professional knowledge involves technical knowledge and operational knowledge of

the organization and mission. Leaders must possess extensive information about their functional areas and organization to be successful. The knowledge required for leadership is not always scholarly knowledge, but is based on the training and experience of the leader.

- Technical expertise often improves a leader's ability to lead the organization. As the Navy becomes more technological, the requirement for leaders to have technical expertise will increase.
- Knowledge of the organization often has greater importance than formal training and allows a leader to fall back on experience to make sound decisions quickly.

Cognitive skills

Cognitive skill or mental intelligence is a necessary asset to leaders because they must gather, integrate, and interpret enormous amounts of information. Followers look for their leaders to have the ability needed to formulate strategies, solve problems, and make correct decisions. Cognitive skill includes having strong analytical ability, good judgment, and the ability to think strategically and multidimensionally. Demands for cognitive skill increase with the increasing level of technology.